

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application

The undersigned wishes to thank Examiner Chen for preparing for and conducting the telephonic interview on July 23, 2003.

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,875,983 issued to Alota et al. or U.S. Patent No. 4,466,865 issued to Tomaszewski et al. Applicant respectfully traverses each of these rejections.

The Examiner's basis for the rejection of claims 1-16 was that "Alota discloses an electrodeposition method of depositing chromium metal and chromium oxide on metal surfaces wherein the substrate can be a Zn Alloy (col. 1 lines 7-20)," and that "Tomaszewski discloses a method of electroplating chromium on a conductive substrate (col. 2 lines 40-47)." Office action issued July 10, 2003, page 3. During the July 23 interview, Applicants argued that "physical vapor deposition" and "electrodeposition" are well-known in the art to be different types of processes, and accordingly, that Alota and Tomaszewski's electrodeposition and electroplating methods did not anticipate or make obvious the claimed physical vapor deposition methods. Despite these arguments, the Examiner contended that electrodeposition and electroplating were subclasses of physical vapor deposition. Applicants disagreed with this proposition. The Examiner, however, indicated that he would forward to Applicants a copy of a reference supporting his proposition.

Applicants left a follow-up voicemail with the Examiner on August 6, 2003 about the supporting reference. In response to this voicemail, the Examiner left a voicemail for the undersigned on August 11, 2003. In the voicemail (a portion of which has been transcribed in

the following passage), the Examiner conceded that electrodeposition and electroplating are not subclasses of physical vapor deposition:

"This is Examiner Chen. Phone number 703-308-3809. I am calling in reference to serial number 09/781,378. We had talked about whether electroplating is the same thing as PVD. I have checked; they are not. The *mechanisms are different and I can see that*. If you can go ahead and put that in your arguments, that would be great...." (emphasis added).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 102 and 103 rejections, and allowance of independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-16.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-16 are respectfully requested.

Should any issues remain, the Examiner is strongly encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory J. Hartwig', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gregory J. Hartwig
Reg. No. 46,761

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